Innovation in Libraries Proposal

Animation and Maker Spaces: A Partnership Between the Los Angeles

Public Library, the University of Southern California School of Cinematic

Arts, and Pixar Animation

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Proposal Statement:

The Los Angeles Public Library will partner with the University of Southern California (USC) School of Cinematic Arts and Pixar Animation to provide classes for credit on Maker Spaces and animation.

Overview of Los Angeles Public Libraries:

Los Angeles Public Libraries (LAPL) is an expansive network of 73 branch locations. The branches extend as far north as Sylmar and as far south as San Pedro. This is the largest population of any public library system in the United States, and serves millions of Los Angeles residents.

LAPL provides a broad array of social, cultural and educational services. 5,800 library volunteers serve the system. After the 2010 economic downtown, LAPL implemented "severe budget cuts" and reduced service hours by 28%. However, in 2011, an overwhelming vote was passed to reinstate normal hours of operation and even to expand the services offered. As such a huge library system, millions of Angelenos depend on the LAPL and its services. According to phone surveys conducted in 2015, 25% of Angelenos visit the library at least once a month. 45,000 people visit the Central branch or other neighborhood branches per day. 4,200 people use the LAPL's WIFI per day. 1,700 people attend programs per day (on average) (2015, p. 3-6).

LAPL Mission Statement and Strategic Plan

The Mission Statement of LAPL is: *"The Los Angeles Public Library provides free and easy access to information, ideas, books and technology that enrich, educate and empower every individual in our city's diverse communities."*

The most updated Strategic Plan created by LAPL is the 2015-2020 document. Key Goal 5 in the plan is to "stimulate the imagination". Key Goal 5 also articulates a plan for expanding the digital media resources available to patrons, stating that "The Library's digital media labs will be places where Angelenos can create animated films, digitize photographs, record podcasts and video blogs— and take classes to learn how to use the equipment and technology". The long-term hope is to "establish digital media labs and flexible spaces that people can use to create content and learn how to use new and emerging technologies" (2015, p. 16-17).

LAPL opened the Octavia Lab in 2019, a Maker Space in the Central Library. They also have a Maker Space at the Chatsworth branch. Patrons must make an appointment for a reservation. The Maker Space offers services such as:

- 3D printing
- Green screen backdrops
- Access to Adobe Creative Cloud, Silhouette Studio, Maker Bot Print

■ Poster printing

Overview of the USC School of Cinematic Arts:

The USC School of Cinematic Arts was founded in 1929, and is the first university in the United States to offer a Bachelor of Arts degree in film. Founding faculty included such Hollywood legends as Darryl Zanuck, D.W. Fields, and William C. DeMille. Over 10,000 living alumni are currently working as writers, directors, film executives, etc. Many of these alumni have won prestigious awards such as Emmys and Oscars.

Our partnership will focus specifically on the John C. Hench Division of Animation and Digital Arts within the college. The undergraduate and graduate programs teach courses "in all facets of animation and digital arts", such as:

○ Classic character animation

○ Visual storytelling

○ Performance capture

○ Visual effects

○ Motion graphics

○ Immersive media

Pixar Animation

Pixar Animation is one of the world's leading animation studios. They are responsible for beloved films such as *Finding Nemo, Monster's Inc, Toy*

Story, and *Up.* Pixar was founded in 1986 by Steve Jobs, who purchased

George Lucas' Computer Division from his Lucasfilm studio. Shortly

afterwards, the company was hired by Disney for work on animated shorts.

Pixar is now located in Emeryville, California, and has gone on to create

hundreds of award-winning animated films. They strive to build a

"collaboration between art and technology" in their work.

Value Proposition:

We would like to propose a partnership with LAPL, the USC School of

Cinematic Arts, and PIXAR Animation. This partnership will entail the use of

the LAPL's extensive maker space technology to offer animation courses to

USC Cinematic Arts students. Currently, there are three minors related to

the animation field. These minors are 3-D Animation, Animation + Digital

Arts, and Science Visualization, which applies animation principles to the

presentation of scientific data. Since these programs are minors only, we

would like to expand this to offer a major as well, and to attract more

students to our new animation department. Our goal is to provide ease of

access for the students in these programs, as well as opening the doors to

potential internships and job opportunities. The LAPL will benefit greatly

from this cooperative as well, bringing young professionals in its doors to

utilize their technology. Through this partnership, any students who take

animation courses at LAPL will study under the guidance of industry

professionals from USC's Cinematic Arts department and PIXAR Animation.

Several students in the program will also be selected for a year-long post-

graduate internship at their headquarters in Emeryville, California. The courses offered initially will be Principles of Animation, Storyboarding and Design, and 3D Modeling. If there is high enough demand, more course selections will be offered in the future.

Opportunity Costs

The opportunity costs involved with this partnership include reassigning library personnel, reserving physical spaces within the library for the courses, and allowing the public to take the courses at a discounted price.

Though USC faculty and Pixar animation engineers will be teaching the courses, library staff members will be needed to coordinate and oversee the courses as they will be held in the physical library space. This may mean that they will be reassigned from a previously assigned task.

The courses will be held in the Central library branch in downtown Los Angeles, in reserved meeting rooms. Library personnel will ensure that the correct number of rooms are reserved, and that they are prepared for the class sessions (i.e. enough seating, working projector/other equipment). This will involve making sure that the students have the correct materials and software. USC and Pixar will provide access to the animation software necessary for students to utilize on LAPL computers. The library may need to supply additional materials such as headphones or cables.

USC film school students and current Pixar employees will be expected to pay full tuition costs to enroll in the courses. A designated

number of course spots will be reserved for members of the public wishing to take the courses. These members of the public will be able to pay a discounted rate as tuition. The opportunity cost to the partners involved will be to cover the difference between the discounted rate and the full tuition.

Communications Plan:

With three industry leaders working together, it is essential to have a clear and defined communications plan. To ensure frequent communication between the three stakeholders, monthly in-person meetings will be implemented. These meetings will begin six months before the start of the semester, using this time to plan the curriculum, decide student support methods, decide on which animation programs to use, and train faculty on their respective roles. Six months in advance may seem excessive, but this time frame allows faculty to work out any potential kinks and to be deliberate in their execution. After the initial planning period, the stakeholders will continue to meet monthly to ensure harmony in the program, as well as to discuss any upcoming events or deadlines within the program. Depending on the program's initial success, these monthly face to face meetings may be used to further develop new courses for the animation curriculum.

Budget/Costs:

Below is a preliminary chart of our initial budget. At the end of the first semester, we will look at the program's overall spending and adjust the budget accordingly.

Instructor Fees	Software Fees	Class Materials/ Textbooks	Activity Fees	Other Faculty Fees
3 instructors $50/hr	$200/ month	$200/ student per semester	$75	Resource Librarian $40/hr Student Success Advisor $30/hr

Basic Assessment Strategy

This partnership will be evaluated after one semester of courses. The criteria upon which the program will be evaluated will be: number of applicants, overall student experience, and feedback from LAPL, USC faculty, and Pixar employees involved.

The number of applicants will be documented and kept track of both at the beginning and end of the courses and in between, if any students should choose to drop the courses. This number will allow program coordinators to gauge interest in the program. If a high number of students are dropping the course in the middle of the program, it will alert coordinators as to immediate changes that need to be made to fit the more varied needs of members of the public (compared with USC students). Noting program retention rates will provide a baseline measure for determining its success.

The overall student experience will be assessed using course evaluations sent out to students via email. Both USC students and members of the public will complete the evaluations. Students will complete the

evaluation once in the middle of the course and once at the end of the

course to present a full picture of their overall experience. A sample

evaluation is given at the end of this section.

A similar evaluation will be given to those LAPL employees, USC

faculty, and Pixar animators involved in the program. The questions will be

specifically phrased to get an idea of what the experience was like to lead

the program, and what should be done differently in future semesters. A

sample staff evaluation is also listed at the end of this section.

Program Evaluation Form (Student)

We always look for student feedback when building our courses and

programs. Please help us to improve programs and continue to build them

around student experiences and suggestions.

Course(s) Taken: _____

Instructor's Name: _____

Your name (optional): _____ Phone or email:

_____

Please let us know how your experience was:

1. Course content was rigorous, timely, and provided real-world application:

   Poor   Fair   Satisfactory   Good   Excellent

2. Course instructor was engaging and had a good rapport with class:

   Poor   Fair   Satisfactory   Good   Excellent

3. Course met my expectations for a partnership between LAPL, USC, and Pixar:

   Poor   Fair   Satisfactory   Good   Excellent

4. Overall, how would you rate the quality of this program?

   Poor   Fair   Satisfactory   Good   Excellent

5. I learned something new by attending this program.

   Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

If you answered "poor" or "fair" to any question above, please explain your answer here:

_____

_____

What changes would you recommend making to this particular program?

_____

_____

Do you have any suggestions for this program in upcoming semesters?

_____

_____

We appreciate your feedback!

Program Evaluation Form (Faculty/Staff)

We always look for staff feedback when planning programs at the Los Angeles Public Library. Please help us to improve programs and build them around community interests.

Course(s) Taught/Facilitated:

_____

Your name: _____   Phone or email: _____

Please let us know how your experience was:

1. Expectations of staff involved with program were realistic and clearly communicated:

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

2. Staff involved with program were given all materials, tools, and resources needed to teach or coordinate the course:

    Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

3. Overall, how would you rate the quality of this program?

    Poor   Fair   Satisfactory   Good   Excellent

4. I feel that continuing this program will benefit not only USC and Pixar but members of the Los Angeles public as a whole.

     Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

If you answered "poor" or "fair" to any question above, please explain your

answer here:

_____

_____

What changes would you recommend making to this particular program?

_____

_____

Do you have any suggestions for future programming that could be

implemented?

_____

_____

We appreciate your feedback!

References:

Bridging the spectrum. USC Cinematic Arts | Home. (n.d.). Retrieved

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